

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Claim 17 is cancelled.

Claims 2, 5-11, 13, 16, 18-20 are amended as follows:

B1  
SUBJECT  
2. (Twice Amended) The process according to claim 13, wherein the soil is treated by mixing the compound into the soil.

5. (Twice Amended) The process according to claim 13, wherein the cross-linked poly(meth)acrylates are produced by a method comprising polymerizing monoethylenically unsaturated monocarboxylic acids.

6. (Twice Amended) The process according to claim 13, wherein the poly(meth)acrylates are produced by a method comprising polymerizing monoethylenically unsaturated monomers containing no carboxylate groups.

B2  
7. (Twice Amended) The process according to claim 5, wherein the poly(meth)acrylates are cross linked by a cross-linking agent selected from a group consisting of methylenbis(meth)acrylamide, ethylenbis(meth)acrylamide, N-methylolacrylamide or triallylamin and combinations thereof.

8. (Twice Amended) The process according to claim 5, wherein the poly(meth)acrylates are treated with a subsequent cross-linking agent in quantities of 0.01 to 10% by weight, at a temperature between 80 and 250 °C.

9. (Twice Amended) The process according to claim 5, wherein monoethylenically unsaturated monocarboxylic acids are neutralized between 10 and 95 mol percent.

10. (Twice Amended) The process according to claim 5, wherein the poly(meth)acrylates have an absorption capacity for synthetic soil solution of more than 30 g/g of the poly(meth)acrylates.

SUBJECT